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UNCLAS YEREVAN 002891

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR S/GAC, EUR/PPD SRUEDY, EUR/CACEN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KHIV](#) [EAID](#) [KPAO](#) [SOCI](#) [TBIO](#) [KSCA](#) [AM](#)

SUBJECT: Yerevan's commemoration of World AIDS Day

REFS: STATE 323552; STATE 326263

1. SUMMARY: Per reftels, Yerevan participated in several activities focused on raising AIDS awareness in Armenia, including an online chat, the launching of a website and an information seminar on the facts about HIV/AIDS. END SUMMARY.

2. On December 1, Ambassador Ordway kicked off an online chat and AIDS awareness seminar at an ECA-funded Armenian School Connectivity Program internet computer center. The online session linked forty students and their health education teachers in nine regions with experts from UNDP, World Vision and local NGOs. Ambassador Ordway sent a message highlighting the importance of knowing the facts about HIV/AIDS and education's power as a tool to fight the spread of the disease. The experts then took over for an hour-long question and answer session. Ambassador Ordway also took questions from media present about US policies and initiatives in the global fight on AIDS. Seven television stations included his comments and footage from the chat during their prime-time newscasts.

3. PAS attended a presentation of the launch of an informational website about HIV/AIDS hosted through the ECA-funded Internet Access and Training Program. IREX, the project implementer, invited members of the NGO and international donor community along with local health officials to attend, listen to a presentation by a local AIDS awareness youth NGO and participate in a roundtable discussion on the HIV/AIDS situation in Armenia.

4. PAS attended an AIDS awareness seminar for Community Connections alumni hosted at the ECA-funded Educational Information Center. The APAO opened the session with a few comments on the importance of understanding that AIDS can happen to anyone and that while Armenia has not suffered from a high rate of HIV infection, only widespread education about AIDS/HIV prevention will keep it that way. A guest speaker from the National AIDS Prevention Center introduced materials and resources developed by the center. A Peace Corps Health Volunteer discussed HIV/AIDS-related projects and activities in Armenia.

5. PAS also translated Secretary Powell's World AIDS Day message into Armenian and distributed it among the media. His message was covered by most television stations, posted by Arminfo news agency in full and published in two major dailies, Hayastani Hanrapetutun and AYB-FE, in part.

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